

# SAFETY ALERT



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
HEADQUARTERS III CORPS AND FORT HOOD  
FORT HOOD, TEXAS 76544-5056



AFZF-GA-SAFE

7 March 2001

MEMORANDUM FOR SEE DISTRIBUTION

SUBJECT: Aircraft Accident Prevention – Safety Alert 02-03

1. On Monday night, one of our III Corps aircraft had an incident that could have led to a tragic conclusion. Aircraft engine torque limitations were exceeded when a crew attempted to take off with one engine at idle. The crew had performed a hit (health indicator test) check prior to take off, which requires each engine being brought to idle. Following the hit check, the crew initiated take off without ensuring both engines were in the fly position, resulting in an over-torque condition. Information from the maintenance data recorder was downloaded and is being analyzed to determine the extent of damage and the corresponding inspector and/or component replacement requirements.
2. The scenario above could happen in almost every III Corps airframe. Haste, distractions, inattention, neglect, loss of situational awareness, waning discipline, or a false sense of urgency are the most common causes in cases like this. Each of these human factors could lead to the damage or the potential destruction of equipment and loss of life, resulting from a momentary break down in aircrew discipline and coordination/judgment.
3. While relatively minimal damage occurred in this incident, we all need to pause and reflect whether this recent incident is an isolated, one-in-a-million occurrence, or a harbinger of worse to come. Every crewmember and leader in our aviation units must remain constantly vigilant for complacency, and continuously update their risk management (RM) plan. Risk potential often cannot be eliminated, but it must be mitigated to the greatest extent possible by reinforcing established, by-the-book standards and safe practices.
4. Commanders must review their training and standardization programs to ensure we are training aviation crews to standard. This incident will be a key learning tool at our next Corps quarterly aviation safety council meeting, 6 May. Let's learn from this close call and continue to train our aviation formations both realistically and safely.

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B. B. BELL  
Lieutenant General, USA  
Commanding

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